

RELEASED IN FULL

INFO	LOG-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	PDI-00	DS-00	EB-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VCI-00	TEDE-00
	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCIE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OIC-00	PA-00	PRS-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00
	STR-00	TRSE-00	NCTC-00	FMP-00	BBG-00	IIP-00	DSCC-00
	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/001W	

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FM AMCONSUL HERMOSILLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1562

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE

AMCONSUL HERMOSILLO

UNCLAS HERMOSILLO 000354

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/MEX; EMBASSY MEXICO FOR POL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, MX

SUBJECT: SONORA: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RECOUNT CONTROVERSIAL; PRD IN SMALL ACTS OF CIVIL RESISTANCE

1. (U) Summary. The partial presidential vote recount in Sonora is over. Official results are not yet known, but the contending parties are vocal with their views on the findings. Felipe Calderon's PAN supporters say that only minor "human errors" were found that do not substantially alter the original huge lead Calderon had in the original count. The PRD supporters of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador are seeking to have the entire vote from several key Sonoran districts nullified. The PRD held very small, peaceful demonstrations August 12 at the highway toll booths and the Hermosillo airport. End Summary.

2. (U) The August 9-14 vote recount of some of the presidential ballots cast in the northern Mexican state of Sonora is completed. For the whole state, 802 "casillas" (voting stations) across seven voting districts, and covering almost 260 thousand ballots, were subject to the recount after the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) filed formal challenges. The voting districts were: #1 San Luis Rio Colorado (74 casillas); #2 Nogales (28); #3 North Hermosillo (216); #4 Guaymas (123); #5 South Hermosillo (216); #6 Ciudad Obregon (160); and #7 Navajoa (86). The Federal Electoral Tribune (TEPJF) delegated responsibility for the recount to circuit and district judges of

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the Federal Judiciary (PJF).

3. (U) The official results of the local recount are not yet released, but are already hotly contested. Officials of the National Action Party (PAN) of Felipe Calderon, who apparently carried Sonora overwhelmingly, claim that the recount found minor differences numbering only around several hundred (and affecting both major candidates) in the whole state, a total which would not impact significantly on the outcome. They chalk up those differences to human error. The most publicized "error" was an apparent crediting of 101 more votes in one District 3 casilla to Calderon than existing ballots. After a few days of speculation about problems of this dimension possibly being rife in Sonora, the missing ballots turned up in the sealed packet for the municipal election held simultaneously on July 2, erasing that discrepancy.

4. (SBU) However, PRD officials, fighting for their candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) however, are claiming that with errors found in a high percentage (80 percent, they assert) of the casillas selected for recounting, there must have been systematic cheating. They urge that all votes in Districts 3, 4 and 5 especially (Hermosillo and Guaymas), should be nullified. (Comment: In the unlikely event that the PRD suggestions were followed, this would have the effect of lowering Calderon's vote total by about 90 thousand votes, with a less dramatic impact on AMLO, who received far fewer votes in the original count. End Comment.)

5. (U) Sonora Governor Eduardo Bours, an Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) politician, publicly vouched for the integrity of the Sonoran electoral process over the weekend. The PRD initially claimed Bours had worked in favor of Calderon and against AMLO, but backed off when the Governor challenged them to produce proof. In advance of the official recount results, Archbishop Jose Ulises Macias Salcedo called on AMLO supporters to preserve social peace and accept the numbers if they went against them.

6. (U) Meanwhile, the PRD has pursued a small scale campaign of "civil resistance" in Sonora through peaceful demonstrations. On August 12, the Principal Officer (PO) observed that fifteen PRD supporters had taken over the toll booths just outside of Hermosillo on Highway 15, the main road north to Nogales. They apparently had done so with no resistance. No police officers were in sight as the PRD followers held up signs calling for a vote by vote recount nationally and waved cars and trucks through without collecting any money.

7. (U) PO arrived at Hermosillo Airport too late to witness the

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PRD demonstration there, but apparently it consisted of about 20 PRD supporters marching through the airport chanting and carrying their banners. They did not block access to any entrance or impede vehicle movements. Reportedly, the reaction of passengers was indifference to the protest or concern that their flights would be delayed. (Note: PO did see a significant augmentation of security at the Hermosillo Airport, but exclusively for the purpose of searching the luggage of passengers on U.S. bound flights. Airline officials were following strictly the prohibitions against liquids and gels in hand-carried bags. End Note.)

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